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FCC - MAILROOM

Federal Communications Commission
Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau

Consumer Complaints
445 12th Street. SW
Washington, D.C 20554

02-277

Dear Sir or Madam.

I am writing to request a definition of what makes a "monopoly?" Specifically, I am referring to Broadcast networks corporations owning both the broadcasting stations and owning the production companies. In essence I want to know why this is not a monopoly?

Before the 1960's most production companies were independently owned and separale from the broadcast network corporations. These independent production companies recruited sponsors/investors for their TV productions: namely Advertisers. This was good for the consumerhiewer since it behooved the advertiser to he a good "corporate citizen" and to respond to the consumeriviewer opinions, likes and dislikes regarding TV broadcasted shows. However, since the broadcasting corporations now own their own production companies the independent production companies have all but disappeared. This is bad Tor the consumeriviewer as well as for the advertisers since the broadcast corporations are beholden to their shareholder's ability to make money from what is produced for broadcast and not the consumer/viewer's opinions, likes and dislikes or the advertiser's ability to reach the largest marketishare for the target demographic audience.

Broadcasting Corporations are compelled to make the most money possible for their shareholders and this does not necessarily mean producing and broadcasting ***the*** most popular TV shows. Sometimes, a broadcasting company can make more money for their shareholders by ending the production of a current and popular TV series and buying the "re-runs" of another TV series and re-airing them instead, as in the case of the Sci-Fi channel's cancellation of the popular series "Farscape" and their buying and airing the re-runs of the series "Stargate-SG 1." The moqey saved by NOT producing original episodes of a current and popular TV series can more than make up for a drop in the ratings/market share average which is beneficial to the Shareholders but the consumerhiewer has less of a viewing choice and the advertisers can not reach as large of an audience.

To make matters worse, the broadcasting corporations not only make money from the advertisers but they also make money from the consumerhiewer by charging ever increasing cable fees. I feel that it is wrong for the broadcasting corporations to charge both the advertisers and the consumeriviewer Tor "products/TV shows" that neither the advertiser nor the consumerhiewer has any influence over and benefits only the broadcasting corporation's shareholders. Does this constitute a monopoly?

Thank you for your advice and your consideration,

Margaret J. Williams

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